Recommendations of Prabir Sengupta Committee on Tobacco Industry

*277. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prabir Sengupta Committee, appointed to look into the tabacco industry affairs, has recommended deregulation of tobacco sector in phases and withdrawal of minimum guaranteed price after a three-year transition period;

(b) whether such a move will end up in virtual obolition of Tobacco Board;

(c) whether the tobacco farmer lobby in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka has alleged that the recommendations of the Committee are trader-friendly and anti-farmers; and

(d) if so, Government's response/reaction thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY):

(a) The 'Peer Review' Report has recommended *inter alia* phased deregulation of production of Flue Cured Virginia tobacco without discontinuing the auction system.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Some representations have been received. The process of consulting the State Governments on the recommendations made in the report is underway.

Ban on selling of Gutka

*278. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several States have imposed ban on sale of Gutka (packed chewing tobacco) due to its hazardous impact on health of its consumers;

(b) the names of States which have imposed ban on sale of Gutka;